



# *News Release*

## **PRESS OFFICE**

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## ***National Ombudsman Issues Small Business Ombudsman Model for State and Local Governments***

### ***Model Developed to Enhance Transparency and Preserve Regulatory Fairness***

**WASHINGTON** – The U.S. Small Business Administration is offering to state and local governments a template for resolving regulatory enforcement issues involving small businesses by establishing their own versions of SBA's Office of the National Ombudsman.

The availability of the Small Business Ombudsman Model for State and Local Governments was announced today by SBA's National Ombudsman and Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Nicholas N. Owens.

The National Ombudsman's primary mission is to help small businesses when they experience excessive or unfair federal regulatory enforcement actions, such as repetitive audits or investigations, excessive fines, penalties, threats, retaliation or other unfair enforcement action by a federal agency.

The model will help state and local governments and other entities create their own ombudsman process to serve the interests of small businesses, small government entities, and non-profit organizations in their communities.

The National Ombudsman has the authority to address concerns of small businesses with federal regulatory enforcement or compliance actions. The model offers a template for establishing a similar process where state and local regulatory enforcement actions are a concern for small businesses.

"This model can improve transparency in state and local governments for small businesses and the entities that regulate them," Owens said. "Fostering a small business-friendly regulatory environment across all levels of government will make it easier for small businesses to grow and succeed."

The model also will provide an overview on how the SBA's Office of the National Ombudsman serves as troubleshooter for the nation's small businesses. "We are sharing the successful tools of the National Ombudsman's office, so other governing entities can come away with a better understanding of how the office is a vital small business resource," Owens said. "This product walks the reader through the organization and processes of the Office of the National Ombudsman, and provides legislative models state and local governments can use to create their own small business ombudsman service."

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The Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 created the Office of the National Ombudsman within the SBA and established 10 regional regulatory fairness boards nationwide.

The Small Business Ombudsman Model for state and local governments may be accessed at [www.sba.gov/ombudsman](http://www.sba.gov/ombudsman). For additional information contact Christina Marinos at [christina.marinos@sba.gov](mailto:christina.marinos@sba.gov), or at (202) 401-8254.

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